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ABSTRACT

The economic, social, political, and pedagogical issues that surround the notion of democratization of higher education are considered, based on various approaches being undertaken around the world to open up higher education to new population groups. Conservative, liberal, and radical interpretations of democratization and the role of education are reviewed. Four criteria for evaluating the extent of higher education opportunity in any national or regional context are: equality of access to higher education, equality of participation within the higher education institutions, equality of education results (success in completing once there is access), and equality of education effects in life changes in the future. Examples of democratization efforts are outlined under the following categories: the expansion of facilities, reforms in admission policies, physical and/or temporal divorce of teaching/learning, different types of courses, and structural changes, including comprehensive reform. Major concerns of the highly developed countries and the developing countries with regard to educational opportunity, educational demand for higher education, and economic and social goals are addressed. Key issues cited in pursuing democratization of higher education include: equality and value judgments, whether equality of opportunity is an appropriate goal, equal versus maximum development, democratization within the university and in relation to society, and the equality equality-meritocracy dilemma. A bibliography is appended. (SW)

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DEMOCRATIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION: ISSUES AND TRENDS*

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Democratization of Higher Education: Issues and Trends

In countries of both the highly developed and the developing world, higher education has experienced dramatic growth, often in the name of "democratization," during the sixties and seventies. For a variety of reasons, this expansion and the changes it has wrought are being questioned. The New York Times of February 7, 1982, reports that trends in the United States are such that even public universities will be cutting back on enrollment and will become more selective. The Director of Admissions of the University of Illinois is quoted as saying that "if you want to study agriculture and you apply early enough, you can be admitted; but those lesser qualified students interested in business and engineering are going to be squeezed out." The Chairman of the Ohio State University's Council on Academic Affairs indicates that "We'd love to get out of the remedial education business." The assistant to the Chancellor of Higher Education of the State of Massachusetts indicates that "People are operating under the fallacy that anybody should be able to get into a college. That's not right. A college degree is not a right under the United States Constitution."[1]

The February 3, 1982, issue of the Chronicle of Higher Education reports on a policy study by the International Council on the Future of the University which indicates that "Italy's universities have been crippled by the country's efforts to move from an elite to a mass system of higher education." The report indicates that the Italian universities are plagued by a chaotic admissions system; inadequate physical facilities; highly polarized faculties; poorly worked out career studies for teachers; high ratios of students to teachers in some disciplines; infrequent attendance of students in some classes; exhausting examination loads on teachers; considerable grade inflation; and a high degree of inefficiency in the overall education process.[2] A 1981 UNESCO study on democratization of higher education efforts in the various regions of the world reports

on a variety of cases in both rich and pour countries around the world which indicate that these problems exist, in one form or another, in most countries.[3]

Central to the dialog of the eighties will be the concept of democratization held by those pursuing the issues. Millot, in discussing France's perpetuation of a stratified school and higher education system and an elitist society notes that, despite the economic dynamism which characterizes the country, such an achievement "is probably rooted not only in the mode of production, but also in the organization of the networks of signs, codes and symbolic values which are controlled by the ruling groups."[4]

The purpose of this study is to comparatively examine the various approaches being taken around the world to open up higher education to new population groups. From a conceptual point of view, different approaches to serving new population groups imply differing notions of what "democratization" of higher education is all about. The various interpretations of "democratization," in turn, imply various responses, not only in terms of "access," but also in terms of higher-education structures, content, and methods appropriate to meet the needs of the new population groups.

How have governments and institutions responded to society's demands for increased access to higher education? What are the assumptions and implications inherent in the different interpretations of equality of educational opportunity? What are some of the major issues that revolve around the concept of democratization of higher education? To what extent have the world-wide efforts of the past decade succeeded in encouraging new population groups to enter higher education? What has been the effect on higher education itself (content, methods, structures, etc.) of reforms designed to democratize post-secondary education? Has expansion of higher education, with more flexible admissions structures, indeed attracted new population groups, or does higher education still tend to serve essentially the elite?

These and similar questions must be discussed in an effort to put the notion of "access" in perspective. Only after "setting the stage" by attempting to address such questions can recent reform efforts,

involving new admissions structures and new population groups, be assessed.

Conservative, Liberal, and Radical Interpretations of Democratization

Until recently the problem of democratizing advanced education was conceived of as a problem of equalizing the chances of gaining access to institutions of higher education. This led to controversies as to biases inherent in most selection criteria. Additionally, policy-makers began to realize that equality of access is not similar to equality of success, either in school or in adult economic careers.[5] Husén cites three schools of thought which have evolved in attempting to define democratization: (1) the conservative and ultra-conservative; (2) the liberal; and (3) the radical and ultra-radical (see Figure I).

According to the conservative conception of educational equality, God has bestowed different amounts of talent upon each human being, and it is up to the individual to make the best possible use of that capacity.[6] The ultra-conservative variant of this philosophy maintains that, by and large, God has given each individual the aptitudes that correspond to the caste or social class in which he is born. The assumption is that he should be content with it, because he had been given what he deserves.[7]

The liberal concept of equality is that all individuals should be given the same opportunity to start their careers but not necessarily that it should bring about greater equality in terms of social and/or economic status.[8] Each individual is born with a certain relatively constant capacity or intelligence. The educational system should be so designed as to remove external barriers of an economic and/or geographical nature that prevent able students of any segment of the population from taking advantage of their inborn intelligence which, in turn, they may use to obtain social promotion. In achieving this goal, a kind of corrective egalitarianism should be practiced, whereby steps are taken to encourage neglected groups to pursue higher education.

FIGURE I

EQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY: SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

School of Thought/ Interpretation of Equality of Educational Opportunity	Essential Assumptions	Role of Educational System	Criteria for Assessing Equality
Conservative/ Ultra-Conservative	• God bestows aptitude on individual. • Concerns of social class not a function of education. • Intelligence is innate, can be predicted at puberty, and can be measured by psychometric testing.	• Equality at juncture of primary and high school. • High school serves as filtering device using exams and tracking. • Access to higher education reserved for those with high academic ability as measured by attitude, aptitude, and achievement tests. • Through educational Darwinism, the "able" enter elite occupations.	• Quality of entering students as defined by psychometric testing. • Genetic explanation of failure of students to gain access.
Liberal/ Reformist	• Individual has relatively constant intelligence, but it is influenced to some degree by socio-economic environment; it can be measured by objective tests which take into account the influence of environment • Can determine individual's potential, but cumulatively, over long period of time. • Academic merit.	• Equality at start/ entrance. • Educational system to remove external barriers. • Compensatory education. • Curricular differentiation. • High school (and in some countries, primary school serves as a filtering device.	• Persisters. • Emphasis on access. • Structural reform and professional explanations of failure (curriculum, methods, etc.).

FIGURE I (continued)

School of Thought/ Interpretation of Equality of Educational Opportunity	Essential Assumptions	Role of Educational System	Criteria for Assessing Equality
Radical/ Ultra-Radical	• Educational system reproduces structure of society, traditionally serves as sorting and certifying agency. • Intelligence is a cultural phenomenon, is influenced by private public environments, and cannot be measured, at least by traditional psychometric approaches. • Ability should not be a barrier to access. • Maximum development of individual according to his needs.	• Equality at end/entry in society. • High school should not be a filtering device; special help should be provided disadvantaged groups.	• Degree to which educational system provides for the needs of all. • Emphasis on effects on life chances. • Welfare capitalism/ socialist explanations of failure of present systems to provide equal opportunity.

The radical rethinking of educational equality gives additional emphasis to the relationship between education and social class. Bourdieu, for example, contends that the educational system tends to assure the function of reproduction, i.e., to preserve or even reinforce the existing structure of society instead of being an agent of social mobility for inherited ability and the motivation to use it. His analysis is supported by Jencks, Bowles, Gintis, and others.[9] According to the radicals, the school supposedly serves as an equalizer but at the same time establishes, reinforces, and legitimizes distinctions.[10] Radical thinkers look at what goes into the system (equal treatment), as well as what comes out (equal students). The implication in terms of policy is that it is not very fruitful to put the responsibility for scholastic success or failure entirely on the individual. One has to shift the larger burden of responsibility to the educational system or to society at large--something that Husén calls redemptive egalitarianism.[11]

The ultra-radical concept of educational equality is that, in order to achieve the long-range objective of more equality in occupational career and standard of living, remedial action must be taken in the wider context within which the schools are operating, i.e., society at large.[12] Thus Bowles argues that:

> The burden of achieving equality of educational opportunity...cannot be borne by the educational system alone. The achievement of some degree of equality of opportunity depends in part on what we do in the educational system but also, to a very large degree, on what we do elsewhere in the economy, in the polity, and in the society as a whole.[13]

Neo-Marxist-oriented critics such as Bowles and Gintis see the role of the traditional school mainly as that of a sorting and certification agency. They maintain that:

> The role of the formal education system in the capitalist society is mainly to prepare a docile and disciplined labor force that will suit the hierarchically structured society.[14]

Illustrative of proposals put forth by the radicals are the suggestions of Jencks, growing out of his analysis of inequalities in the United States. He advances a system of private schools, a system of financing which provides the poor with economic incentives for leaving school earlier, and a socialism reached by making the rich ashamed.[15] He recommends that social investments toward equalization be made in equalizing income rather than equalizing opportunity.[16] Luck is the principal actor in Jencks' account of the causes of inequality.[17]

Four Criteria of Higher-Education Opportunity

Another way of summarizing current thinking is to suggest that there are four criteria for assessing the extent of higher-education opportunity in any national or regional context: (1) equality of access to higher education; (2) equality of participation within the institutions of higher education; (3) equality of ecuational results (success in completing once one has access); and (4) equality of educational effects on life chances in the future.

The first criterion stresses the importance of examining selection procedures lower down in the system, as well as the students' characteristics and socio-economic variables which condition their abilities to compete for access to higher education. The second criterion suggests that students and the various communities they represent participate in the planning and development of the curriculum, administration, and distribution of resources in the institution. The output criterion focuses its attention upon the university's internal variables and whether or not they give all types of students equal chances of succeeding once they are in the institution. Finally, the equality of life chances variable suggests that the entire social, economic, and political structure of a society must be such as to assure equality of opportunity if higher education itself is to be truly democratic.

Country Experiences

The range of country and institutional attempts at democratization is extensive. Without being at all comprehensive, recent approaches which have been discussed in the literature include the French "Instituts Universitaires de Technologie;" the German Federal Republic's

Gesamthochschule Kassel; the Norwegian district colleges; the British Open University; the English and Welsh polytechnics; the Yugoslavian vise skole; the curtailment of the length of courses in the Netherlands; the Danish self-administered University Centre of Roskilde; the Irish comprehensive system of higher education; Sweden's U68; Canada's abolition of Province-wide examinations, loan and grant programs; the establishment of community colleges, adult education at York University's Joseph E. Atkinson College, and the Cooperative plan at the University of Waterloo; the erection of colleges and the use of additional criteria for admissions in Nepal; Venezuela's technical institutes; USSR's correspondence courses, paid leave, and televised courses; Hungary's publicity schemes and pre-university preparatory courses; the admission of mature students at Tanzania's University of Dar-es-Salaam; USA's University without Walls, the learning contract systems, televised courses, adult-education programs, preparatory courses, evening schools, and others; Japan's correspondence courses; Egypt's technical institutes; Sudan's School of Extra-Mural Studies at the University of Khartoum; Iraq's part-time, multi-level courses at Al-Mustansiriyah University; Western Europe's (Belgium, Denmark, France, West Germany, Italy, Sweden, Netherlands, U. K.) work leave for educational purposes; Bulgaria's preparatory courses for peasants and factory workers; Romania's and Poland's bonus-point system; and the open universities in Venezuela, México, Costa Rica, and Colombia.

The various attempts at democratization can be grouped into five categories, as shown in Figure II. The list of countries mentioned under each category is meant to be illustrative and is far from comprehensive.

The various attempts to equalize educational opportunity follow differing interpretations of democratization which are embedded in each country's political, historical, economic, and social traditions. This is not to say that there is always national unanimity, and different universities and institutions of higher education in the same country may follow different approaches based on differing conceptions of education, equality, and opportunity. In some countries, of course, with highly centralized higher-education systems, nationally legislated legal definitions preclude, to one degree or another, such variety.

FIGURE II
FIVE CATEGORIES OF HIGHER EDUCATION DEMOCRATIZATION EFFORTS

1. The Expansion of Facilities
   a. Universities; colleges (most countries)
   b. Junior/Community colleges (originally in the United States; more recently, Chile, Ghana, South Korea, Thailand, etc.)
   c. Vocational, technical or district schools; workers' colleges (Algeria, Eastern Europe, Egypt, Kuwait, Morocco, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Soviet Union, Venezuela)

2. Reforms in Admissions Policies
   a. Open admissions (Nigeria, South Korea, Thailand, United States, though only in selected institutions)
   b. Abolishment of traditional college-entrance examinations (Canada)
   c. Consideration of non-traditional criteria for admissions, e.g., alternative college-entrance tests, age, competence, quantity and quality of work experience (Nepal, Sweden, United States)
   d. Lottery for admission to limited spaces within the same ability grouping (Netherlands)
   e. Enlarging previously limited faculties (i.e., medicine, engineering) by dropping special entrance requirements (Italy)
   f. Acceptance of mature students; acceptance of older students with work experience; giving college credit for work experience (Tanzania, United States, most of Western Europe, Zambia)
   g. Quotas; giving bonus points to the disadvantaged/minority (France, India, Poland, Romania, Thailand)
   h. State/regional proficiency examinations so that students compete only against those in their regions (United States)
   i. Grants; loans (Canada, Colombia, India, Nigeria, Venezuela)

3. Physical and/or Temporal Divorce of Teaching/Learning
   a. Open universities; correspondence courses (Algeria, Burma, Colombia, Costa Rica, India, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, México, Sudan, Thailand, USSR, United Kingdom, United States, Venezuela)
   b. "University without Walls," contract learning (México, United States)
   c. Educational work leave (Austria, Belgium, Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, USSR, United Kingdom)

4. Different Types of Courses
   a. Compensatory programs; preparatory courses (Bulgaria, Hungary, Nigeria, United States)
   b. Adult education; extension courses (Egypt, Iraq, Lesotho, Malaysia, Singapore, Sudan, Swaziland, United States)
   c. Seminars; workshops; short courses; evening classes; labor market courses; ethnic studies (Burma, Hungary, Poland, Sweden)

FIGURE II (continued)

5. Structural Changes, including Comprehensive Reform

   a. Associated labor; self-administered institutions (Denmark, Yugoslavia)
   b. Comprehensive institutions combining academic and vocational education; transfer of credit; short- and long-cycle programs (Federal Republic of Germany)
   c. Regionalization and decentralization of higher education (Burma, Canada, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Thailand)

Even though developed countries have made the transition from the first phase of development of higher education (quantitative expansion) to the second phase (qualitative reform), they still seem to be primarily concerned with "access" or "who gets in" aspects of democratization. Only a few (i.e., the University Centre of Roskilde, the Yugoslavian "associated labor" groups, and the American "contract learning") are examples of the "participation" criterion of democratization. The preparatory courses and remedial programs in a number of countries are examples of responses concerned with achievement or "what happens once they are in," and the Swedish and German structural reforms are examples of the "outcome" test of democratization.

The developing countries, on the other hand, have been primarily concerned with expansion of a more or less traditional higher education to encompass more students and are increasingly concerned with the mis-match between numbers of graduates in differing fields and the job market. In addition, they are diversifying higher education opportunity to include various specialized training institutes and are attempting to spread higher-education opportunity more equitably from a geographic point of view. The eighties should see many of these countries moving toward greater emphasis on qualitative reform and toward greater integration between university and non-university post-secondary education.

For the highly developed countries, the major "access" questions revolve around concerns for the equality of educational opportunity. Are there groups of people whose children still are limited in their opportunity to gain entrance to an institution of higher education? Is the cooling out (drop-out) process still at work among students from underprivileged families who get in? Does the value (quality and prestige) of the degree obtained from an institution negate the "outcome" and the "effects on life chances" measurement of democratization? These and related issues can be noted recurring in case studies on access such as those prepared by OECD countries during the late seventies which are listed in the bibliography. These questions concerning access, in turn, are giving rise to an overall concern relating to higher-education policies in general. This is reflected in the move by OECD to study higher-education policies globally as an outgrowth of the access studies of the late seventies. OECD's

20 August 1979 paper is one of the first in its Policies for Post-Secondary Education Program.

For developing countries, the two major questions are: How to deal with the increasing social pressure for higher education; and How to relate higher education more directly to economic and social goals of the countries so that the increasing cost of higher education can more clearly be seen as productive?

Questions that one might raise concerning the experiences in both highly developed and lesser developed countries are many. Have the various policies to increase access, in fact, succeeded in "democratizing" education? Or have they led even larger numbers of students up the same blind alleys to ultimate dead ends? Have the more elaborate reforms produced, in fact, perpetuation, at a higher degree of complexity, of the dysfunctions they were supposedly correcting? Is the traditional pattern of socio-cultural reproduction still the best way of assessing the effects of the education system, even though its consequences are less visible and more diversified?[18]

Obviously, in virtually all countries, there has been an increase (often dramatic) in the enrollment of college-age and disadvantaged students in a growing number and types of post-secondary education. Sweden, for example, has developed adult-education courses, labor-market training, radio and TV courses, correspondence courses, folk high schools, and other "distance instruction" schemes.[19] Similarly, Nepal proudly presents its statistics: In absolute terms, the number of higher-education institutions increased from two in 1957 to 49 in 1970, and student enrollment boomed from 250 to 17,200.[20] In Canada, the number of part-time students at the universities rose from 86,000 in 1966 to 178,000 in 1975, and the number of mature students is estimated to have multiplied many times over.[21] The University of Paris VIII (Vincennes) reports that it has succeeded in attracting those it was intended to serve: 39 percent do not have the baccalaureate degree, 20 percent work part-time, and 43 percent work full-time.[22]

Even though access is a measure for determining the degree of success in the democratization of higher education, it is, however, only one measure and a crude one at best. Gooler (1977) sets seven criteria of

democratization: (1) access (kinds of people, how many, and the conditions of access or factors that may make access a reality); (2) relevancy to the needs and expectations of the learners; (3) quality of program offerings (face-validity, technical/production quality, logic of products in terms of match of products or program to learner needs, and ease of delivery); (4) learner outcomes (who learns what was intended, which participants achieve what was intended, extent to which participants achieved their goal, unintentional learnings, and long-term effects of what was learned); (5) cost-effectiveness; (6) impact of program (on institution, program, and learner); and (7) generation of knowledge (to what extent does the program contribute knowledge useful to the better understanding of problems, issues, and practices of the field).[23]

Gooler's report card includes several aspects of democratization including access, participation, results, and effects on life chances. His fifth and seventh criteria serve as additional evaluation measures more akin to the interest of education economists and policy planners. But still, Gooler's criteria seem to be limited. Should unintentional results be counted as pluses or minuses?

A perhaps simpler method to assess attempts at democratizing higher education might be to ask: (1) Has the scheme accomplished what it was planned to do? (2) Did the plan have positive or negative effects on other aspects of the educational system? and (3) Is the program flexible enough to accommodate incremental changes or is a fundamental restructuring necessary? Thus if the Open University was mostly intended to serve housewives, part-time workers, and educationally/culturally disadvantaged students but ended up attracting teachers with university degrees, then the program could be considered a partial failure. This, for example, is what occurred in Sweden when adult education courses were offered geared to those who completed only compulsory education.[24] In regard to the second question, if abolishing college-entrance examinations results in a great increase in the enrollment of students but the university is not ready to service them in terms of counseling programs; preparatory courses; curricula adapted to their needs and aspirations; teaching methods; variety of student assessment procedures; physical facilities; and so on, then again the high drop-out rate and the problems of student adjustment

and dissatisfaction may be indicators of the partial failure of the new admissions structure. And last, if a program is flexible enough to allow for a "mistake" to be remedied by an addition, change, or deletion of one or more elements in the educational system, it might be considered more desirable than one that needs to be abandoned or totally restructured.

The majority of the case studies in the literature use access/input as measures of programs, unintentional learnings, and the impact of the programs on the participants' life chances. Liberals and those who look at problems from an equilibrium point of view might be content with the piecemeal approach to social change, but radicals and those who believe in the conflict perspective may want to look at the income distribution of graduates from different programs, the politics of new admissions structures, and the role of post-secondary education as a tool for social change. Thus the definitions used for "democratization" and the selection of proxies may result in conflicting evaluations of the same program depending on the perspective to which the author adheres. The reason is clear: higher education (as all education) tends to reflect the society in which it is embedded, and long-term efforts at democratization of higher education will depend on the prevalent notions in society as to what democratization is all about.

Key Issues in Pursuing Democratization of Higher Education

As countries and higher-education institutions have pursued various reforms in an effort to achieve the elusive goal of a democratized higher education, however defined, a number of key issues appear to be recurring in one form or another.

1. Equality and Value Judgments

Why is it that even though there is so much agreement on equality of educational opportunity as an ideal, there is so much disagreement about its application? The disputes, Ennis claims, are often about the value judgments required for the application of the concept.[25] To specify what constitutes education and having an opportunity would be to offer a conception of the concept of equality of educational opportunity--the source of considerable disagreement.[26]

Coleman, as an example, suggested a list of five at least partial operationalized conceptions of equality of educational opportunity, one of which he favored: equality of results, given the same background and ability.[27] He was resolved in advance to ignore facilitators and deterrants stemming from a person's background.

Judgments about opportunity are, in part, responsibility judgments, which are dependent on judgments about what environmental changes would have made a difference and what the consequences of such changes would have been, and on judgments about the appropriate focus for change.[28] For example, is higher education a right, a privilege, or a claim? Is educational opportunity or equality of educational opportunity a fundamental right that a government should recognize? Education in the past has been a privilege reserved for the elite, the religious, and political nobility who were thought to be necessary for the management of the social order and therefore worthy of academic learning. But now the concern is for the educational rights of categories of citizens which different societies have failed to recognize in the past.[29]

Authors such as Lapati state that education is a fundamental human right, and that the delay in the recognition of such rights resulted from philosophical interpretations of rights as privileges.[30]

2. Identical Opportunity or Identical Treatment?

To what extent is equality of opportunity an appropriate goal? Coleman argues that since each individual is born with a highly varying set of private resources, genetic and environmental, society can only decide "what level of public resources and what imbalance of public resources it should invest to reduce the level of inequality that arises from private resources."[31]

Ennis distinguishes between personal, environmental, and genetically determined natural ability. He believes that differences in people's personal factors such as motivation, traits, abilities, decisions, ideas, beliefs, and goals are results of inequalities in environmental factors, and that only environmental factors are significant in shaping opportunity.[32] He further argues that the causes of deterrents (the presence or absence of something) for equality of opportunity may be only genetically or

environmentally determined. Since selective genetic practices, because of their costs in human intimacy, dignity, and freedom, are judged unacceptable, only environmental factors can be manipulated to restore equality. He suggests that:

> Some writers...have avoided endorsement of full equality of educational opportunity, because they apparently believed that this ideal implies control of too many things, including "early upbringing, size of families, and breeding...." They need not have felt so restrained.[33]

Campbell and Boyd contend that equality of opportunity need not mean identical results, and that both excellence and equality can best be achieved through the maintenance of a pluralistic system of higher education which ranges from open-door community colleges to very selective institutions.[34] Similarly, Dewey's idea of equality does not suggest absolutely identical treatment of different human beings, but rather that every being warrants equal consideration of his needs and his pursuit of happiness.[35]

3. Equal vs. Maximum Development

Authors concerned with the democratization of education usually describe the institutional inputs and the results of corrective or redemptive programs when they assess the extent to which an environment offers equal educational opportunity. But Lesser and Stodolsky advocate not equal opportunity for identical development but equal opportunity for maximum development of each group or individual.[36] They believe that within groups of children, social class influences the level of abilities but does not significantly affect the pattern of abilities. Thus, although whatever might be done to compensate for social-class differences would tend to make groups of children more similar, the distinctive pattern associated with ethnic groups would (and should) remain.[37] Compensatory programs aim to give disadvantaged students what they need to make them like everyone else. The aim of supportive education, in contrast, is to give students what they need and can use maximally in order to learn to cope with and change their particular environments, even if they are made more different from everyone else in the process.[38]

4. Democratization within the University and in Relation to Society

Passeron considers two approaches to democratization, depending on whether the concept is applied to the internal functioning of the university instruction or to its external effects. In Approach A, the educational system can be analyzed as a social sub-system which, within the framework of a specific activity organizes more or less hierarchically arranged institutional relations between the agents. In Approach B, the university can be considered in its relationship to the entire social fabric. It acts in reference to the inequalities (of power, income, prestige), of that fabric, not only in terms of access policies but also in terms of selection of faculty and the collective effects of different educational policies on society.[39]

In relation to A, for example, one could evaluate the degree and form of democracy which characterize the organization (the hierarchical order among the staff members and the regulations governing access to the profession), and assess the weight of teaching authority by looking at the teacher-student relationship. In regard to B, one could look at the greater or lesser social mobility (inter- or intra-generational) of individuals among the classes or groups of a society, and the greater or lesser inequality (in power, income, prestige) among classes or groups considered as a whole.[40]

An absence in one aspect of the definition of democratization may negate or lessen the equality mirrored by another aspect. For example, one could have democracy in the sense of social mobility but none in terms of teacher-student relationships. Universities in Eastern Europe, which in the '50s and '60s opened their doors fairly widely to various social classes (peasants, workers) hitherto excluded, retained, or intensified the most authoritarian characteristics of the teaching relationship.[41]

5. Chain Reaction

Post-secondary education cannot be analyzed in isolation. It is only another stepping stone between an unequal, pre-school birth to an unequal post-graduate entry into a stratified society. Equalizing higher education or discussing democratization in isolation defeats the purpose.

If higher education alone cannot redress past inequalities, then the question becomes: Can higher education serve as a tool to democratize life chances, or are the efforts simply manicured manifestations of the political and economic elites' attempts to appease social pressure? And if the argument is that higher education can bring about equality of educational opportunity, then the question becomes: How do we do it?

Those who believe in the conflict paradigm support the first argument, defining democratization as outcome and/or effects on life chances, with higher education as one institution within a polity. This approach criticizes structural differentiations, and emphasizes equity. Those who believe in the equilibrium paradigm choose the second argument, defining democratization mostly as access, limiting the problems to those within the educational system, criticizing the individual student, and emphasizing efficiency.

6. Equality-Meritocracy Dilemma

A meritocratic society is one in which the status that a person comes to hold is earned, rather than given on the basis of family or other inherited characteristics. Egalitarianism refers to the belief that everyone is inherently of equal dignity and should have a fair or equal opportunity to develop technical skills and to acquire a higher education.[42] A conservative conception of egalitarianism will not be in conflict with the basic conception of meritocracy, but a liberal definition of equality cannot tolerate meritocratic practices.

On the input side of the higher-education system, colleges and universities have been under growing pressure to contribute to greater social equality by admitting students to post-secondary studies without discrimination. On the output side, the university is required to serve as a selection and certification agency to produce employable students. Students admitted according to principles of equity are somehow to be arranged according to merit, certified according to intellectual achievement, and stacked in the hierarchical job market that awaits them off campus.[43]

With the lack of consensus as to priorities to be assigned to these different functions; the changing interpretation of key concepts such as merit, competence, equality, and opportunity; the questionable validity of

the basic facts from which generalizations have been drawn by social scientists over the last few decades (among them Coleman, Jensen and Jencks); and the way the "facts" are converted into policy, it is hardly surprising that there is indeed a dilemma.[44]

Brubacher sees equality of opportunity as a compromise of the paradox involved in recognizing individual differences while treating the college population equally. He believes that justice and equality are more or less incompatible.[45]

Kerr remarks that we must devote our attention to how the contribution of the elite can be made clear to egalitarians and how an aristocracy of the intellect can justify itself to a democracy.[46]

Green states that the real challenge is not one of democracy to meritocracy but of equality to privilege.[47] "The dispute is not whether the educational system should reward ability. The question is rather how narrowly the nature of the ability to be rewarded should be defined."[48] The dilemma is best exemplified with a saying by an Irishman: "I'm as good as you are, and a great deal better too!"[49] Gardner contends that egalitarianism does not and cannot seek altogether to eliminate individual differences or their consequences: Equality of opportunity means:

> An equal chance to compete within the framework of goals and the structure of rules established by our particular society; and this tends to favor certain kinds of people with certain kinds of gifts.... Men are not equal in their native gifts nor in their motivations; and it follows that they will not be equal in their achievements.[50]

Jefferson, too, included egalitarianism in the Declaration of Independence but stated a selective criterion for admission to higher education, as he conceived it in Virginia.[51]

> Colleges and universities are the egalitarian way to make an aristocracy of achievement acceptable in a democratic society. It is part of our democratic ethos that if you apply meritocratic principles to a large enough crowd, the resulting discrimination is acceptable. Both policies--entry by egalitarian

> principles and exit by meritocratic standards,...--
> are imposed on higher education's insiders (faculty,
> administrators, trustees) by outsiders (parents,
> patrons, politics, and the practical world of "down-
> town"). The outsiders' preconceptions, in turn,
> are reflected in the students' predilections: they
> want an equal chance at the beginning, but also a
> job at the end.[52]

Husén argues that egalitarianism and meritocracy are incompatible. "The school cannot at the same time serve as an equalizer and as an instrument that establishes, reinforces, and legitimizes distinctions."[53]

Karabel, dealing with the philosophical implications of the pros and cons for an open admission to university, realizes the dilemma between equality and selectivity and states the problem in the following way:

> The ideology of academic standards brilliantly
> reconciles two conflicting...values: equality and
> equality of opportunity. Through the system of
> public education, everyone is exposed to academic
> standards, yet only those who succeed in meeting
> them advance in our competitive system. Everyone
> enters the educational contest, and the rules are
> usually applied without conscious bias. But
> since the affluent tend to be the most successful,
> the net result of the game is to perpetuate inter-
> generational inequality. Thus academic standards
> help make acceptable something which runs against
> the American grain: the inheritance of status.[54]

In the long run the problem of achieving equality of opportunity is one of restoring multiple options, based on different values but values that are not ranked along only one dimension.[55]

Likely Future Trends

The concept of equality of educational opportunity was debated by Plato and Aristotle only as an academic exercise; it had no relevance during the pre-industrial period; it reflected the class structure during

the post-industrial period; it was limited to access during the post-World War II era; and finally climaxed as a major issue in the late 1960s with student unrest and campus protests.

Accompanying the proliferation of the interpretations of "democratization of higher education" were different assumptions regarding the sources for existing inequalities, corresponding structural implications, and a spectrum of criteria for the assessment of the concept. Once it was agreed that equality of educational opportunity was a worthy goal, then the questions remained: How do we define "equality," "education," and "opportunity?" Equality to what extent? Is equal development possible? and Can equality and meritocracy co-exist?

Depending on the ideology one follows, the possibility of equality of educational opportunity is being challenged. Equilibrium theorists believe in efficiency and incremental changes and emphasize access, whereas conflict theorists believe in equity and then question the power of higher education or education in general as a tool for social and economic change. They often suggest that tinkering with the educational system will, on the whole, have little effect on life chances until other socio-political changes occur in society.

Surely a realistic approach lies somewhere between the two extremes. Society is, indeed, experiencing change, often revolutionary and often evolutionary. The very demand for access to higher education is an indicator of such change. The experience of various countries in dealing with pressures for access illustrate the range of actions possible within the context of very different social and economic systems.

As noted by Clark Kerr, few countries adhere any longer to the notion of an elite-oriented traditional higher-education system with very limited access, determined solely by birth (aristocracy) or demonstrated talent (meritocracy) or some combination of the two.[56] A number of countries (following Kerr's model) are moving toward production-oriented systems whereby the university and other parallel institutions are designed to prepare manpower for all sectors of the economy. Still others are moving in the direction of a universal-access higher-education system, with community colleges, junior colleges, open-university schemes, mature-age entry schemes, etc., to make access to some kind of higher-education

institution available to a wider segment of the population. Most countries, in addition, have introduced short courses, non-formal and extension schemes, and life-long education programs for adults at all ages. None have, as yet, eliminated the vertical effect of higher education on social stratification which would lead to horizontal equalization of all citizens. Kerr suggests that the experience in China, during the cultural revolution, may be the closest we have come to a "horizontal" education approach, but even there, a political and military elite remained "above the mass of the people, as well as a small technological elite with an educational background."[57]

As one examines the various cases whereby countries have attempted to expand and/or democratize higher education, it becomes clear that the trend is toward putting society and the student first and the institutions of higher education second, with more attention given to the needs of students than to the convenience of the institutions. The trend is toward diversity of individual opportunity rather than uniform prescription, with a de-emphasis on time, space, and even course requirements and an emphasis on competence and performance. The trend is away from traditional notions of higher education: that the university campus is the only place where advanced education can be had; that youth is the only age of learning; that knowledge flows solely from the teacher; that education is properly measured by the accumulation of courses and credits; that education must be experienced in unbroken sequences of 16 or more years; that higher-education programs have to be of two or four years' duration; and that degrees and diplomas are the only indicators of talent and competence and the only instruments by which upward social mobility may be acquired.[58]

Concluding Remarks

The variety of country and institutional experiences is an indication that institutions and governments have indeed responded to the demands for the democratization of higher education. But how does one explain the continued controversy surrounding higher education? One major factor could be the conservative nature of the institutions and of change in general.

> Weighted down by many of the traditional attitudes,
> and rigid structures of the surrounding society,
> the instructional systems seem still to lag behind
> social growth as a whole.[59]

Perhaps we have overloaded the universities; we are expecting too much of institutions that have been the historical transmitter of the existing social order, when we demand that they be an innovative agent for radical change. A second important factor may be the swift and ad hoc incremental innovations that governments or institutions have adopted.

Can the kinds of strategies adopted by countries and institutions truly democratize higher education? Are these strategies leading to equal access to higher education; equal participation in the process; equal success once admitted; and equal success in life chances once completed?

These questions must be answered cautiously. Educational reform cannot, in itself, resolve social dilemmas that arise out of the basic nature of the economic, political, and social system itself. A society based on largely unequal positions of power, income, and social status among adults will not be able to alter these relationships solely through tinkering with the educational system.

Essentially, efforts to democratize higher education cannot fully succeed without challenging the basic inequities within society as a whole. A total concern for presently marginal groups must be built into new economic and social priorities. Development policies must be employment-oriented. Investment in rural areas must equal those in urban areas. Appropriate technologies for development must receive priority; technologies which help improve productivity of all sectors of the economy, not just those which benefit the urban-based, capital-intensive subsector.

Educational policy-making, as a redistribution process, is a highly political activity, and the educational system will continue to be a major vehicle for transmitting the culture and preserving the status quo. The educational system corresponds to the institutions of the larger society and serves the functions which are assigned to it for reproducing the economic, political, and social relationships reflected in the prevailing ideologies and organizations.

As long as society is differentiated by a distinct socio-economic and political class structure, opportunity for higher education as defined by access, participation, outcome, and especially life chances, can only be unequal. If society needs a spectrum of skills from plumbers and clerks to physicists and analysts, and if society accords unequal economic and social prestige to those with varying skills within the spectrum, higher education will mirror those prejudices.

The limited wisdom of the social sciences with respect to the complex set of genetic, psychological, cultural, social, educational, political, economic, and happenstance factors that affect a person's life chances do not augur well for definitive answers about specific linkages between a particular educational or training strategy and the escape from inequality. One can only hope that the universities themselves will place priority on the study of these phenomena so that the effects of the various new strategies to provide increased access to higher education can be tracked. The subtleties of the many issues involved are only beginning to be understood and controversies concerning them will be with us for years to come.

Footnotes

[1]Edward B. Fiske, "State Schools Now Moving to Selectivity," New York Times, Vol. CXXXI, No. 45,217 (February 7, 1982), p. 1 and 56.

[2]Malcolm G. Scully, "Italy's Moves to Mass Higher Education Seen Hurting 'Emergent' Social Groups," Chronicle of Higher Education, Vol. 23, No. 21 (February 3, 1982) p. 19-20.

[3]Seth Spaulding and Arka Kargodorian, Democratization of Higher Education through New Admissions Strategies: A Comparative Study of Theory and Practice. UNESCO Document ED-81/WS/4. (Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, February 1981).

[4]Benoît Millot, "Social Differentiation and Higher Education: The French Case," Comparative Education Review, Vol. 25, No. 3 (October 1981), p. 368.

[5]Torsten Husén, "The Equality-Meritocracy Dilemma in Higher Education," in The University's Response to Societal Demands (New York: International Council on Educational Development, 1975), p. 34.

[6]Henri Janne, "Egalité et éducation," in Egalité des chances d'accès à l'enseignement: Deux points de vue. Cahiers/Occasional Papers 8. (Amsterdam: European Cultural Foundation, July 1981), pp. 1-74.

[7]Torsten Husén, op. cit., p. 20.

[8]Ibid., p. 21.

[9]Ibid., p. 27.

[10]Ibid., p. 29.

[11]Ibid., p. 35.

[12]Ibid., p. 31.

[13]Samuel Bowles, "Towards Equality of Educational Opportunity?" Harvard Educational Review, Vol. 38, No. 1 (Winter 1968), p. 95.

[14]Samuel Bowles, "Schooling and Inequality from Generation to Generation," Journal of Political Economy, Vol. 80, No. 3, Part II (May/June 1972), p. S219-S251; Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, "IQ in the U. S. Class Structure," Social Policy, Vol. 3, No. 4/5 (November/December 1972 and January/February 1973), pp. 65-96.

[15]Richard D. Noonan, "Semantics of Equality of Educational Opportunity," Teachers College Record, Vol. 76, No. 1 (September 1974), p. 83.

[16]James S. Coleman, "Equality of Opportunity and Equality of Results," Harvard Educational Review, Vol. 43, No. 1 (February 1973), pp. 135-136.

[17]Charles Frankel, "The New Egalitarianism and the Old," Commentary, Vol. 56, No. 3 (September 1973), p. 58.

[18]Jean-Claude Passeron, "Democratization of Higher Educaton in Europe: A Retrospective View," Prospects, Vol. 9, No. 1 (1979), p. 40 and 44.

[19]Richard F. Tomasson, "Radical Restructuring of Higher Education in Sweden," Educational Record, Vol. 56, No. 2 (Spring 1975), p. 86.

[20]Gajendra Man Shrestha, "Higher Education in Nepal," College and University, Vol. 50, No. 4 (Summer 1975), p. 523.

[21]Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Reviews of Rational Policies for Education: Canada (Paris: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1976), p. 47.

[22]Lynn Payer, "Innovative Paris Campus Faces Uncertain Future," Chronicle of Higher Education, Vol. 14, No. 21 (August 1, 1977), p. 4.

[23]Dennis D. Gooler, "Criteria for Evaluating the Success of Non-Traditional Post-Secondary Education Programs," Journal of Higher Education, Vol. 48, No. 1 (January/February 1977), p. 79-92.

[24]Torsten Husén, "Les politiques égalitaires en Suède: Rhétorique et réalité," in Egalité des chances d'accès à l'enseignement: Deux points de vue, Cahiers/Occasional Papers 8 (Amsterdam: European Cultural Foundation, July 1981), p. 87.

[25]Robert H. Ennis, "Equality of Educational Opportunity," Educational Theory, Vol. 26, No. 1 (Winter 1976), p. 4.

[26]Ibid., p. 6.

[27]James S. Coleman, "The Concept of Equality of Educational Opportunity," Harvard Educational Review, Vol. 38, No. 1 (Winter 1968), p. 17.

[28]Robert H. Ennis, op. cit., p. 19.

[29]Shirley M. Clark, "Changing Meanings of Equal Educational Opportunity," Theory into Practice Vol. 15, No. 1 (February 1976), p. 78.

[30]Americo D. Lapati, "Education: Privilege, Claim, or Right?" Educational Theory, Vol. 26, No. 1 (Winter 1976), p. 28.

[31]James S. Coleman, "Equality of Opportunity and Equality of Results," Harvard Educational Review, Vol. 43, No. 1 (February 1973), p. 135.

[32]Robert H. Ennis, op. cit., p. 9-16.

[33]Ibid., p. 15.

[34]Roald F. Campbell and William L. Boyd, "Federal Support of Higher Education: Elitism versus Egalitarianism," Theory into Practice, Vol. 9, No. 4 (October 1970), p. 232-238.

[35]Shirley M. Clark, op. cit., p. 77.

[36]Ibid., p. 80.

[37]Gerald Lesser and Susan S. Stodolsky, "Equal Opportunity for Maximum Development," in Equal Educational Opportunity. Prepared by the Editorial Board of the Harvard Educational Review. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969), p. 135-136.

[38]Ibid., p. 137.

[39]Jean-Claude Passeron, op. cit., p. 45-46.

[40]Ibid., p. 46.

[41]Ibid., p. 47.

[42]Joseph B. Giaquinta, "Meritocracy, Egalitarianism, and the Open Classroom," Educational Reform, Vol. 40 (1976), p. 215-216.

[43]Dorotea Furth, "Selection and Equity: An International Viewpoint," Comparative Education Review, Vol. 22, No. 2 (June 1978), p. 259; Harlan Cleveland, "Guess if you Can, Choose if you Dare," in The University's Response to Societal Demands, Edited by Philip G. Altbach, (New York: International Council on Educational Development, 1975), p. 245 and 256.

[44]Dorotea Furth, op. cit., p. 259; Torsten Husén, "The Equality-Meritocracy Dilemma in Higher Education," in The University's Response to Societal Demands, edited by Philip G. Altbach, (New York: International Council for Educational Development, 1975), p. 13-14.

[45]John S. Brubacher. On the Philosophy of Higher Education. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1977), p. 62-63.

[46]Clark Kerr, The Uses of the University (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 121.

[47]Thomas F. Green, "Challenge to Meritocracy," Liberal Education, Vol. 58, No. 2 (May 1972), p. 157.

[48]Ibid., p. 159.

[49]John W. Gardner, Excellence: Can We Be Equal and Excellent Too? (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), p. 6.

[50]Ibid., p. 12.

[51]John S. Brubacher, op. cit., p. 61.

[52]Harlan Cleveland, op. cit., p. 247.

[53]Torsten Husén, "The Equality-Meritocracy Dilemma in Higher Education," in The University's REsponse to Societal Demands, edited by Philip G. Altbach, (New York: International Council on Educational Development, 1975), p. 29.

[54]Jerome Karabel, "Open Admissions: Toward Meritocracy or Democracy," Change, Vol. 4, No. 4 (May 1972), p. 40.

[55]Torsten Husén, "The Equality-Meritocracy Dilemma in Higher Education," in The University's Response to Societal Demands, edited by Philip G. Altbach, (New York: International Council on Educational Development, 1975), p. 35.

[56]Clark Kerr, "Five Strategies for Education and Their Major Variants," Comparative Education Review, Vol. 23, No. 2 (June 1979), p. 171-182.

[57]Ibid., p. 179.

[58]Ewald B. Nyquist, "Non-Traditional Approaches," Today's Education, Vol. 63, No. 4 (November/December 1975), p. 62-63.

[59]Michael Huberman, Reflections on Democratization of Secondary and Higher Education (Paris: United Nationsl Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, 1970), p. 6.

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